

BUILD SKILLS

from The Canterbury Tales: The Pardoner's Tale

LITERARY ANALYSIS

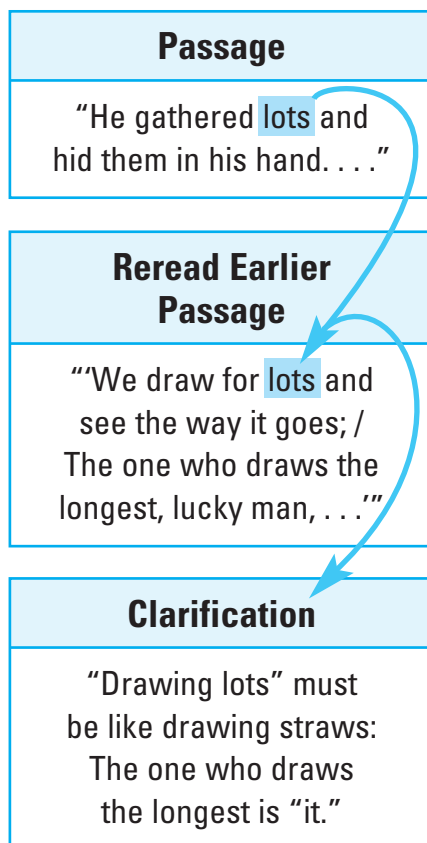
Allegories are stories that have both literal and deeper, more symbolic meanings. “The Pardoner’s Tale” is a type of allegory called an *exemplum*. That is Latin for *example*. This tale is an exemplum against the sin of greed. The Pardoner uses the tale as an example in one of his sermons. As you read “The Pardoner’s Tale,” think about how it illustrates this sermon.

An allegory may use **archetypal narrative elements**. These are basic story-telling patterns found in folk literature. These elements include the following:

- Characters, events, and other things that come in threes
- A test of characters’ moral fiber leading to their destiny
- A mysterious guide who helps point the way
- A just ending that rewards good or punishes evil

READING STRATEGY

Rereading passages can help you understand the characters, the sequence or causes of events, and the meaning of unfamiliar language. As you read “The Pardoner’s Tale,” reread earlier passages to clarify any lines that confuse you. The diagram on the left shows an example. Use the diagram on the right to clarify a difficult passage.



Passage

Reread Earlier Passage

Clarification